

THE
COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

VOL. V. BOSTON, DECEMBER 1, 1843.

No. 23.

To the Editor (pro tem.) of the Common School Journal.

I HAVE read the Sixth Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education,—which you have just published,—with great satisfaction. If a familiar spirit had gone with me, through life, and recorded my doings, observations, thoughts and feelings, he would hardly have written a more faithful history than is now done in this report; for every page and almost every paragraph brings back to me what I have ever felt or heard, as a pupil, teacher, or school committee man. And the physiological part of the report corresponds with my observations, in my intercourse with the world.

In every respect have our schools improved, vastly improved, since my school-boy days. I know such scenes as I have witnessed, of insubordination on the part of the scholars, or want of dignity or self-respect on the part of masters, would not *now* happen. It seems to me that teachers are *now* more conscientious than formerly,—they love their work more,—and are therefore more successful; still the schools are as far from *my ideal* as ever.

Vacations in the annual schools are too short, and the children are kept too much at their work,—more than is required of boys at academies, or of young men in college, and even more than the most ambitious and studious in the professions require of themselves.

On the other hand, the intervals between the winter and summer schools in the districts, are too long, especially for those children who might be kept at study through the year. Now, although these districts could not be expected to maintain annual schools, yet much more could be done than is now done. They might, in many cases, perhaps in nearly all, so increase their schools that the male and female terms should cover the whole year,—the former being four months each, the latter six months each,—with vacations of three weeks each, in April and November, and one of two weeks in the summer, in berry time, when a large portion of the children get weary of school, and *will* get leave of their mothers to go berrying. This would keep the small children in school as much as they should be, and give the larger boys and girls more schooling than they now average, and probably for as long a time as their employers would be

persuaded to spare them from work. I think we may hope to arrive at this, in our country districts, and then lay another plan of improvement.

Female teachers are employed in many of the winter schools in the country, and have the sole charge of all,—boys and girls,—large and small. It is not unusual to see stout young men learning of a woman. So far as I have seen or heard, this plan works well. I never have known an instance of a woman's failing, for want of capacity or moral force, in the government or instruction of a winter school. On the other hand, one school within my knowledge was turbulent and unmanageable under masters, for many years, till 1830, when a very firm and discreet lady taught and governed it without any difficulty.

Would it not be worth while, to investigate this matter, and set the results before the public? I am persuaded that we could obtain vastly more talent, skill and wisdom for the purpose of teaching in women, than we can in men, at the same price. And, if we will pay female talent, and power of accomplishing purposes, as well as we do the male, we should have, in many instances, better schools than we now have. Let our committees offer twenty dollars a month for the greatest quantum of capacity for government and teaching, male or female, and they will make much the best bargains in purchasing this of the women. Unhappily, we graduate the prices of the respective services of the male and female teachers, not by the worth of their services, but by other and extraneous notions. In the district before alluded to, they gave cheerfully eighteen or twenty dollars a month to men, that were good for nothing, and hesitated at giving eight or ten dollars a month to a woman, who accomplished all their purposes.

If districts would offer fifteen or twenty dollars to women qualified for the winter schools, we should soon see a generation of female teachers, such as we have not seen, and they would have a power and influence over the whole schools, such as the male teachers cannot now possess.

An important consideration in this matter, is this;—with the man, school-keeping is but an incidental business, which he does merely by the way, while he is waiting to enter upon, or continue, the great purposes of his life. He is out of business,—or he wants money to carry him through college,—or teaching is more profitable than his present employment on his farm, or in his shop,—therefore he takes a winter school. But feeling, all the time, that the labor of his life thereafter will be accomplished none the easier for any skill which he may develop in teaching, however conscientious he may be in bringing all his present powers to his work, he cannot feel that interest, to develop himself more and more as a better and better schoolmaster, that he would to improve his farm or increase his mechanical or professional skill, which will be sources of comfort and profit during his life.

But the great purpose of a woman's life,—the happy superintendence of a family,—is accomplished all the better and easier by preliminary teaching in school. All the power she may

develop here will come in use there. Feeling that she has now entered her highway of existence, she will work with energy and cheerfulness, and strive to bring forth new power day by day. If then marriage should be offered, she is ready, more ready than most others. If this should not be her lot, she has then the best, and readiest, and most reputable means of support, and an enviable position in society. She has permanent or almost permanent employment, winter and summer; certainly as much as her physical power would permit, and wages sufficient to enable her to enjoy and re-invigorate herself in the vacations.

Not long since, in one of the most cultivated towns in the Commonwealth, I took great pains to ascertain the wages of journeymen shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, carriage-makers, wheelwrights, harness-makers, cabinet and piano-forte makers, and some others. The result of this examination showed, that while every class of these received more, some of them received fifty, and a few one hundred per cent. more than was paid to any of the teachers of the district schools in the same town.

If then we pay less for teaching than for painting or shoemaking, and give only temporary employment, we cannot expect that men of the best talent, the greatest sagacity, the highest hope, will leave those callings to go into schools, or will be willing to prepare themselves with the expectation of being idle during most of the year.

But if we offer women the wages we now give men, we hold out to them higher inducements than is offered by any other calling, and we shall therefore have our choice of all the female talent and energy that is to be hired. And then we may engage the first-rate women to do that work which we too often entrust to second and third-rate men.

Every topic of the report is equally interesting to me, and suggestive of what I have before seen, felt or suffered.

But what most interested me, is the disquisition upon the study of Physiology. It has set forth the truth in this matter plainly, and in such terms, that all may read and understand it, and none can resist its conclusions. The report has not magnified the importance of studying the laws of physical life, —on the other hand, even with this explanation, the world will not understand all the truth.

It is terrible,—it is almost impossible to conceive of the immense havoc we make with health, and waste upon life. Few have ever measured our delinquency here, or told how far we come short of fulfilling our physical destiny, and thereby our moral, our intellectual and spiritual destiny. Still fewer lay this to their conscience, or consider that they have any duties in this matter.

By the right use of the physical elements which God has given us, by invariably applying to this use our whole intellect and our conscientiousness, I believe we may nearly all reach to our three-score and ten;—and, not only this, but that every one of those seventy times three hundred and sixty-five days may

be occupied with labor or with pleasure, and on closing our account with this life, we might each look back upon twenty-five thousand five hundred and fifty days filled each with a full day's labor or a full day's enjoyment. Not one obtains this, and our race, even in its most favored condition, probably does not exceed thirty-three per cent. of its natural term. Deduct three sevenths, perhaps more, for the average abbreviation of the term of the lowest life; deduct a large portion for the period when we are under the control of innumerable diseases; deduct the months and years when we are not diseased, but are yet invalids, or dragging out a premature old age, possessing only a diminished life, or eking out a wasted one;—deduct also the hours, days, and weeks, when we are languid, heavy, stupid or sleepy, out of due time,—the time when we have not our energies or faculties at our command, when we cannot do, in the hour, or in the day, its own appointed work, or have not the courage to do that which we would;—subtract then the periods when we are a prey to melancholy, to moroseness or to suspicions, when, from some derangement or sluggishness of the liver or other viscera, our spirits are heavy, our temper irritable, or our resolutions weak;—deduct all these from the full integral twenty-five thousand five hundred and fifty days, which God has appointed to each one of us for labor and enjoyment, and it is woefully manifest, how small a portion of our earthly destiny we obtain out of the means and facilities which a most generous Providence has placed in and about us.

Verily, our lives seem like mismanaged estates, of which part is good, some is absolutely lost, a portion is in debts not worth collecting, and of another part it is doubtful whether the balance is debt or credit, and finally a mortgage covers the whole; so that, by all these impairments, the estate falls far short of its promise, and its owner is nigh unto poverty. So the days of our life are sometimes full of health; at other times sickness, or debility impairs them; at one period we have so little a quantum of vitality as to make it hardly worth the possession; at another, we are so reduced as to render it doubtful whether we are dead or alive; and, finally, many of us engender, within our frames, tubercles, dyspepsia, heart diseases, &c., which may, at any time, and at their own option, close our lives, in spite of anything we can *then* do to prevent it.

The law of cause and consequence is as certain, in regard to human life, as in the inanimate world. The man overloaded with labor, is as sure to sink as a ship overloaded with freight. To eat, for the mere sake of eating, without regard to quantity or quality of the food, and its fitness for digestion, is as great a folly as to paint for the sake of painting, without regarding the quantity or quality of the paints, or their fitness for the expected color. An undeveloped man or woman can no more go through the labors of life without breaking down, than a half made vehicle can carry the usual burdens.

Our education is intended to be preparatory for *life*, but it seems to look to *property*, principally. We are taught how

water runs, and how the winds blow; we learn the courses of rivers, the heights of mountains, the laws of gravitation, and of electricity, and the uses of metals, and perhaps the way of managing steam.

But how the blood runs,—how the current of life may ebb and flow,—of the laws of digestion, of respiration, or muscular contractions,—of these nothing is said;—for it has not been thought that the knowledge of the laws of our frames and life could do us any good. And although we have believed and taught that all dead machinery needs our supervising care, and therefore our acquaintance with its properties and powers, we have not thought that we were to superintend the vital machinery of our own bodies, but that the Creator himself would keep them in order, in spite of all the abuses which we might heap upon them. And more than this, many would have deemed it an almost impious presumption to believe that any human means would preserve their health or prolong their lives.

The knowledge of physiology, then, not being wanted, we have had neither teachers nor books for the people until recently.

Wanting books upon this subject, deficient in teachers, and having no general interest in, nor regard for, the laws of life, the human race has made less improvement in health, strength and capacity than it has in other matters. We have sought out many inventions for comfort, for economy, for taste, and for indulgence. But in the production of these our health has not been regarded; certainly it has been but a secondary consideration. Air-tight stoves save fuel and give a better temperature, but they deprive us of ventilation. We wear more comfortable clothing than our fathers wore, but we enervate ourselves by over-clothing, and thus increase our colds and rheumatisms. We have better vehicles and roads, and therefore travel at less cost of time, money, and fatigue, but we lose much healthy exercise, and have more indigestion.

We have improved our breeds of cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, and hens. By careful selection of parentage, by faithful development of their powers, and by proper use, we have brought them to such a state, that they accomplish much more of the destiny which we mark out for them than their predecessors did. But we do not seem to think we can improve the race of man. We give the beasts the most favorable circumstances for the growth, the maintenance and the continuance of their faculties, —and forget that the same law of life applies to humanity.

One man entails upon his children the imperfections of his own constitution. Another marries his daughters to tuberculous, nervous, or even epileptic husbands. A third, who selects, with the greatest care, a trainer to break his colts, will put his babes into the hands of the cheapest nurse, whose knowledge of her business would not, if otherwise directed, obtain the charge of the horses.

The comparative talent, interest, and faithfulness which we give to the care of human and quadruped life, after their full

development, corresponds to that which is given to their commencement and their growth.

One would suppose, that, such is the love of life, and so great are the enjoyment and the profit of health, men would eagerly study the laws and circumstances most favorable to these. But this is not the fact. It is not for want of power, that we neglect human physiology. We study other matters. Almost every house has its book on cookery, its treatise for the appetite, but none for the stomach and digestion. We have a plenty of works on cattle-raising, sheep-raising, and on poultry. But I have never yet found, in more than two private dwellings, where there were young children, *Combe*, or any other good work on infancy.

Moreover, there seems to be an instinctive aversion to the study of anatomy and physiology. Even the pictures of the muscles of the body partly dissected bring up to us the idea of death, which, from our infancy, is made horribly familiar to us all, in shape of a skeleton. This report will do more to remove the morbid sensitiveness on this subject, than anything else that has come to light. It will excite men's interest in this study, and lead them to think more upon it. It has explained the great laws of respiration, digestion, and of the functions of the skin so clearly, that all may understand, and made them so beautifully interesting, that men will find no objection to this exposition of their inner frames.

I have again and again read the physiological treatise, with more and more satisfaction, and if I were to write out all that it suggests to me, of examples and of principles, I should fill more pages than your Journal would admit.

MEDICUS.

AN HONEST BOY.—That “honesty is the best policy,” was illustrated some years since, under the following circumstances, detailed by the Rochester Democrat. A lad was proceeding to an uncle's to petition him for aid for his sick mother and her children, when he found a wallet containing fifty dollars. The aid was refused, and the distressed family were pinched with want. The boy revealed his fortune to his mother, but expressed a doubt about using any portion of the money. His mother confirmed his good resolution,—the pocket-book was advertised, and the owner found. Being a man of wealth, upon learning the history of the family, he presented the fifty dollars to the sick mother, and took the boy into his service, and he is now one of the most successful merchants in Ohio. Honesty always brings its reward,—to the mind, if not to the pocket.—*Social Monitor and Orphan's Advocate.*

“Those beings only are fit for solitude, who like nobody, are like nobody, and are liked by nobody.”—*Zimmerman.*

(From the Newburyport Herald.)

LETTERS TO A PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER.

No. II.

My — — —: I closed my last letter with a promise to say something on the subject of ventilation; a few words will redeem this promise. Were I able, you do not wish me to talk scientifically about the composition of our atmosphere,—to tell you how it is made up of “oxygen, nitrogen, and carbonic acid gas,”—and how the former of these is the “vital air;” a fresh supply of it being continually needed to support life. You have been in railroad cars,—on board steamboats,—in “market halls,”—in parlors where the windows are never opened, and the fumes of breakfast, dinner and supper are condensed and *kept*, as if on purpose to add to the impurity of the atmosphere; you have been also in “*best* chambers,”—too often, with all their neatness of furniture and snow-white counterpanes, the *worst* chambers, because never opened except to receive and give nightmare sleep to some poor victim, who would willingly exchange all his glory and privilege as an honored visitor, for a little of heaven’s fresh air. You have been in such vehicles and apartments enough to know how essential to comfort and health is a frequent change of air. “The immediate effects of breathing impure air,” says Mr. Mann, in his last Annual Report, which you *must*, and which all good people ought to, read and ponder, —“are lassitude of the whole system, incapability of concentrated thought, obtuseness and uncertainty of the senses, followed by dizziness, faintness, and, if long continued, by death.” Now very visible will be some of these effects, with the addition of extreme fractiousness and restlessness on the part of the pupils, and weariness and despondency on your part, in your schoolroom, unless you take pains to keep it well and thoroughly ventilated. If your apartment is not constructed so as to effect this object constantly, you must make, as often as once an hour or thereabouts, an apparatus for the purpose; and that apparatus may be the simple process of opening the doors and windows, one and all, till the breezes have swept out, clean and entirely, all “pestilential stuff.” Be sure and do this; even if meanwhile you are obliged to put on cloak and hood, or take a run to keep yourself comfortable. It will be necessary for you to go out of your room occasionally and return to it, in order to ascertain the state of the air; for one may get accustomed to breathing a foul atmosphere so as not to perceive its foulness. I have been into schoolrooms, full of bad air and offensive in the extreme, and found the teachers quite unconscious that they and their scholars were inhaling mouthfuls of poison every moment. Be careful about the temperature of your room;—let it be neither a furnace nor an ice-house; avoid sudden changes;—keep the thermometer, if you have one to keep, at about 60° to 65°. In this connection I may as well speak of what will lie very near the heart, and have not a little to do with the lungs and limbs of your scholars. I mean the recesses. Mr. Mann

says,—and in this, as in most matters relating to schools, he is a very sensible *man*, a *practical* man, an *economical* man, understanding that wise economy which is prospective, and takes care of the real treasures of society, namely, the muscle and sinews of its members which furnish that ability to labor, to labor with the brain as well as the hands, without which, gold is no better than dross, and capital an unproductive useless mass of dead matter,—Mr. Mann says, “In nine tenths of the schools in the State, composed of children below seven or eight years of age, the practice still prevails of allowing but one recess in the customary session of three hours, although every physiologist and physician knows, that for every forty-five or fifty minutes’ confinement in the schoolroom, all children, under those ages, should have at least the remaining fifteen or ten minutes of the hour for exercise in the open air.” Pray, do not follow those nine tenths to do evil; for, not to allow young children to run and romp, is as unnatural as it would be to put sprightly kittens in straight jackets to teach them demureness. At recess time, look out for those disposed to stay in,—those pale-faced, narrow-chested, feeble-framed boys inclined to continue bending over their books or to gather around the stove,—look out, I say, for those, and drive them forth, for they are the very fellows that need exercise most, and most frequently. They may be the jewels of your school as scholars, but their brains are over-active and need checking. Every one of their disproportionate mental efforts is indeed “a cast of the shuttle that weaves their shrouds!” Send them out,—lead them out,—run with them, if they will not run of themselves, and you will do them more good than if you taught them the whole multiplication table in a single forenoon. Generally speaking, the child that cannot relish play, is destined to the imperfect life of a miserable invalid, or to an early grave.

Endeavor to classify your scholars as far and as perfectly as you can. Have a system, in which recitation and study shall regularly alternate, and each pupil be always employed about something. Avoid, if you possibly can, having a single *idle* minute; let there be a time for everything and everything at its time. Try to get a pleasing variety in the arrangement of your work. Do not put all the reading together, or all the spelling; but judiciously recognize that love of novelty in children, which, as it is natural, must be of some use.

I will add, that you must have care for your own health and brightness. If your schoolhouse is near your residence, take a long sweep to get to it; for you will find in this case, and in a most important sense, “the farthest way round *is* the shortest way home.” Proper exercise, which shall set your own blood in active flow, will help you wonderfully to keep your temper and endure your toil.

Truly, yours.

UTOPIA.

MY LITTLE PRIMER; MY FIRST SCHOOL BOOK: PERKINS & MARVIN. BUMSTEAD'S SECOND READING BOOK; BUMSTEAD'S THIRD READING BOOK: WILLIAM D. TICKNOR.

We rejoice to see a complete series of books for the Primary Schools, made throughout upon the principles which we have for many years been advocating. These principles are, essentially, the following, *viz.*:

1. Teaching children to read by means of words first, and letting them learn the names of the letters afterwards.

2. Avoiding all senseless fragments of words, and all nonsense columns.

3. Beginning with familiar, household words, the names of things, actions, processes and relations, with which children are familiar, and proceeding to the names of things less familiar.

4. Adapting instructions not only to the capacities but to the taste of children.

1. As to the mode of teaching by means of words first, we have often, in various places, and more than once in this Journal, given our opinion. Instead, therefore, of repeating it, we give extracts from these little books. They may be familiar to some of our readers; to many they will be entirely new.

"As it regards the manner of using this book, particularly at the commencement, it is better that the teacher should take her own familiar way, rather than use any formal language prepared for her. The following is only offered as a very brief illustration. The teacher, after saying a pleasant word or two about the book, turns to the seventh page, and, pointing to the word *man*, says, 'Do you see that? It is a word. I can read it. Now hear me read it: *man*. [~~Do not name the letters, only the word.~~] There is another word under it. Hear me read that: *boy*. And there is another: *girl*. I have read three words,—*man, boy, girl*. I wonder if you can read them too. You may see if you can.' Here let the teacher point, while the scholar pronounces. If he tries, and especially if he succeeds, encourage him. A little kind encouragement, in these first steps, has a wonderful effect. Let him read the same words as they are repeated on the same page, which will be enough for the first lesson. His next may be a review of the first, with such addition as his capacity and interest will warrant. And so with succeeding lessons, keeping in mind the rule, *Slow and sure*, and that repetition must be continued until perfection is acquired. The scholar may learn the whole fifteen different words on pages 7—10, before anything is said to him about the letters; or, if the teacher prefers, he may begin with the letters earlier. All that is insisted upon is, that the learning of the *word* should precede that of the *letters*; and for this plain reason,—it is the natural order, and therefore must be incomparably easier than the reverse. Throughout the whole book, then, let it be an invariable rule to have the attention of the child first directed to the *whole word*. **LET THE FIRST EXERCISE, WITH EVERY NEW PAGE, BE, THE READING OR PRONOUNCING OF THE WORDS.** And never require a scholar to spell a word before

he has so far learned it as to be able to read it. Tell him the pronunciation over and over again, if necessary, until he remembers it, but never waste time in requiring him to spell a word in order to find out its pronunciation.”*

“There are two ways of spelling,—one that is apprehended by the *ear*, and the other by the *eye*. The former is the ordinary, and, to a great extent, the exclusive method in primary schools. Whatever advantages it may possess, it is doubtless wanting in practical character. It trains the ear, and not the eye; and therefore is deceptive to those who suppose that an ability to utter the *names* of the letters of a word, necessarily secures practical spelling, or an ability to place the *forms* of those letters in proper combination on paper. The latter method, on the contrary, is entirely practical. It is, in fact, *the* spelling of every day life. And such is its superiority to the other, it may be safely affirmed, that a dozen words written from memory or dictation on a slate, is a more profitable exercise than the mere vocal spelling of fifty words.

“Here it will be objected, that children, at so early an age, cannot write. But this is a mistake. At any rate, they can be taught to make some legible marks in imitation of the printed letter; and this, too, with much pleasure on their part, and little trouble on the part of the teacher. Experience has proved that the various characters represented on the picture-slate, (see cover,) can be made by these young learners. True, they will be, at first, ill-favored, and almost illegible; but encouragement and practice will every day improve them. This method of spelling, therefore, is believed to be indispensable, partially at least, to all those who would be sure of making their scholars good spellers.”

Two remarks only need be added: By learning words first, the child has immediately, from the very beginning, something to think of; by being allowed to write them himself on the slate, he has something to do. In learning to read by the old way, a child has nothing to think of for many months after he begins to use books, and is expected to keep still with nothing to do. The one method makes a child a thinker, and a busy one; the other teaches him not to think, and to sit idle. Every one who will take the trouble to think himself, must perceive how pernicious must be the effect upon the habits of a child, as a thinking being, to be condemned to occupy himself, for months, and even years together, with words, unmeaning fragments of words, and unmeaning columns of words, with which it is hardly possible that he can connect any thoughts. What a blighting effect upon his literary taste, upon his love for books and learning, to have, for all this period, no association with books, but that they are full of signs, signifying nothing!

* Spelling, as commonly practised in schools, is of no assistance whatever in the way of pronunciation, inasmuch as the *names* of the *letters* of a word are, in general, totally different from its *elementary sounds*. Directing a child who stumbles in pronouncing a word, to “spell it” in the usual way, is only increasing his embarrassment. If oral spelling consisted, as it should, in uttering the *elementary sounds* the ease would be different.”

Every one who has had any experience with little children, must know that *the most difficult thing is to find employment for them* which shall make them happy or even easy. Is not he to be listened to, who promises to make the child's first associations with books pleasant, to introduce words as the representatives of thoughts and feelings, and, at the same time, to furnish an interesting employment for a portion of a child's time?

2. As to the tables of *abs*, as they have been called, which have hitherto wasted so much time, we have the following observations from the introduction:

"A little boy, who had been a long time plodding his dreary way through the alphabet, and had finally reached the columns of three-letter syllables, one morning, (the first snow of winter having fallen during the night,) on rising from his bed, and looking out at the window, exclaimed with ecstacy, 'Hurrah! there's a sleigh! S-l-a, sleigh! s-l-a, sleigh!!'

"'John,' said his father, 'that does n't spell *sleigh*.'

"'Don't it! What does it spell, sir?'

"'O, I don't know,—it don't spell anything.'

"'Why, father! What is it in my book for?'

"In preparing this little work, it has been the intention to make it strictly a suitable book for children in their first efforts at learning to read and spell; and to have it contain only what is, in some degree at least, intelligible and useful,—only that concerning which a child, on making the inquiry, *What is it in my book for?* would at once receive, from a teacher or parent, a satisfactory answer.

"For this reason, there is here an exclusion of that chaotic mass of fragments of words which it has been usual to present to the eyes and ears of children in their first exercises. Such lessons, it is believed, are as unnecessary as they are uninteresting. They convey no thought; they rather teach a child *not to think*.

"Children are delighted with ideas; and in school exercises, if nowhere else, they are disgusted with their absence. The present selection of words has been made with reference to this fact; and it is hoped that no one can be found which is not, partially, at least, intelligible to the young scholar, or capable of being made so. No regard whatever has been paid to *length*, or to the popular opinion that a word is *easy* because it is *short*. This is a great error. A word is not easy to read and spell simply because it is short; nor difficult because it is long; it is easy or difficult, chiefly as it expresses an idea easy or difficult of comprehension."

3. In the little Primer, there is hardly a word which the child does not daily hear. He thus has only to learn the visible signs which represent words, and by words objects which are already familiar. One half the difficulty of the process is avoided. What he knows helps him constantly to that of which he is ignorant. What a vast advance upon that method of arrangement which presented such a set of words as these: *bri*,

cri, dri, fri, gri, pri, tri, wri, not only completely useless combinations, but which, in most cases, where they seem to be useful, would mislead a child who should attempt to use them; or such as this: *pretend, despond, rebut, relapse, revolve*, &c., which a child at the introductory schools could not easily be made to comprehend.

In "My First School Book," more uncommon words are gradually introduced, but always in such company that they may be easily explained. We have, for instance, a fearful list of ailments, remedies, and their incidents. But many of them the child will already know, and the rest will be partly understood from their connection, and quite well with a few words of explanation. Some of these lists indeed would be excellent guides, to a sensible teacher, for lessons on things and their qualities.

The connected reading lessons, especially the earliest, are admirable. It would be difficult to find anything better adapted to the purpose of interesting little children. Many of them are selected from the most approved authors. Some of the best are made for this collection. An example of the latter class is Lesson X. in the Third Reading Book.

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL.

A noble instance of this in the case of Henry Morris, who had suffered much ill-treatment from his brother Charles.

1. CHARLES, will you lend me your kite, this morning, for a little while? Do, if you are not going to use it. I will be very careful to keep hold of the string, and not let it be lost.

No, I shall not lend you my kite. I am not going to lend my kite to everybody, I know.

2. But I should think you might lend it to me, for a little while, if you are not going to use it yourself.

You need not ask me again; for I will not lend it to you. Besides, I am going to use it myself.

3. O! if I had thought you wished to use it yourself, I would not have asked you to lend it to me. You will let me see you fly it, I presume.

I do not care what you see, was the gruff reply of Charles, as he left the room, to get the kite.

4. Charles came back, with the kite in his hand; and, seating himself by the window, pretended to be occupied in fixing his kite.

5. All at once, he took out his penknife, and began to cut the kite into pieces; and in a minute, he had entirely destroyed it, and thrown the fragments out at the window.

6. O! Charles! cried Henry, how could you do that, instead of lending it to me? You said you were going to fly it.

7. No, I did not say I was going to fly it. I said I was going to use it, and I have used it, have I not? Now you may go and look as *blue* as you please about it, and be revenged, too, if you like.

8. It may be that I shall, said Henry, in a low voice, as he took his cap, and went out to the garden. There he seated himself under a large tree, and was quite melancholy.

9. How can Charles treat me so? said he to himself. Anybody would think he hated me, he takes so much pains to annoy me.

10. Henry sat, for a long time, silently musing, when his face suddenly lighted up, as if some pleasant thought had crossed his mind, and he arose, and walked into the house.

11. A few days after this, Mr. Morris went to the city, and brought home

a beautiful set of little garden tools,—watering-pot, wheel-barrow, and all,—complete.

12. After calling his two sons to him, he said to Charles, I overheard your conversation, the other day, with Henry, when, instead of lending him your kite, you tore it to pieces.

13. And, as I have noticed other instances of the same kind in you, I have thought it my duty to punish you, and to reward Henry, who has always been uniform in his mildness towards you.

14. I have bought for him these beautiful garden utensils. Take them, Henry; they are yours. Charles, you may go and spend the afternoon alone, and remember, that unless you amend your course of conduct, you will be hated and despised by the whole world.

15. The mortified Charles retreated from the room without a single word; and, hiding himself in a little grove, behind the house, shed bitterer tears than he had wept for many a day.

16. Is it true, said he to himself, that I am such a wicked-dispositioned boy? I must be, or my father would never have spoken so sharply and looked so harshly at me.

17. My father is right. I have ill-treated Henry, and he has never, in any way, returned my abuse. He deserves a reward, and I a punishment. O! I wish I could be as good a boy as he is!

18. When it began to grow dark, he slowly returned to the house, and crept, without observation, to the chamber.

19. As he opened his chamber-door, he was surprised to see Henry's garden tools, standing near the table, and, on the table, a letter, directed to himself. He snatched it up, and, opening it, read the following lines:—

20. *My dear brother Charles:*

I know you have been wishing for a set of garden tools, and I beg that you will do me the favor to accept of mine. I should not take half the pleasure in using them myself, that I shall in seeing you enjoy them.

21. *I hope you will not think that I have any hard feelings about the kite; I have not, I am sure; for I forgive you, with all my heart, and, when I said, that, perhaps, I might be revenged, believe me, I meant this kind of revenge.*

22. *My dear brother, let us be loving and kind to each other, as brothers should be, and then we shall be happy.* *Your affectionate brother,*

HENRY.

23. The letter fell from the grasp of Charles, and, covering his face with his hands, burning tears of shame trickled fast through his fingers.

24. Taking the letter, again, into his hand, he went down stairs, to find his father and Henry. They had just finished supper, and were sitting together in the porch, before the door.

25. O, father! O, Henry! he said, forgive me, forgive me. I will try to be a good brother for the future; only forgive me this time.

26. The gratified father assured him of forgiveness, and Henry heartily shook his hands and kissed him.

But you must take back your present, said Charles; I cannot take that.

27. Keep it, said his father, keep it; it will help you to bear in memory your good resolutions, and remind you of your brother's generous revenge!

The selections seem to be made according to the principles of the following judicious observations, which are from the preface to the second and third Reading Books:

“‘An indispensable quality of a school-book is its adjustment to the power of the learner.’ This is preëminently true of a *Primary School reading-book*; and by the ‘power of the learner,’ is meant not merely his ability to pronounce the words, but also to give them vitality and beauty, by expressing the thoughts and feelings which they are intended to convey.

“The lessons, therefore, should be those which can be made intelligible to the child, and in which he can take a lively inter-

est. Their scenes and language should be so natural and vivid, so identified with his own knowledge, conceptions, and feelings, that, while reading from the book, he shall seem to himself, and to others also, to be giving utterance to that only which is fresh from his own mind and heart.

"In addition to this, in selecting and preparing the materials for the present series of books, so far as they relate to reading, the aim has been to have them furnish a suitable variety of exercises in every department of *juvenile* elocution; and thus to aid the young learner, as well as the printed page can do it, in becoming an accomplished young reader. It should be borne in mind, that, as in learning to sing, so in learning to read, much which is indispensable must come from the living teacher alone; and that an attempt to make the book supply her place would be alike preposterous and useless. **ORAL INSTRUCTION**,—that which is familiar, conversational, and vivacious, awakening the zest of the children; that which is explanatory, illustrative, and interrogatory; and, above all, that which gives *specimens* of true, natural, and intelligent reading, and, when necessary, specimens of an opposite character;—such oral instruction forms, indeed, the main thing in this important branch of primary school education. And here, it may be suggested, is an opportunity for the pains-taking teacher to use the *black-board* with much advantage."

BEN DE BAR gives the following description of "dodging," in a farce called the "Artful Dodger":

"Now, sir, I'll prove how useful, philosophical and beneficial my speculations are:—I order a suit of clothes of a tailor, which I never intend to pay for,—benefits tailor. As how? He orders a piece of cloth of woollen draper. Cloth being ordered, he benefits woollen draper, on strength of which he orders new dresses for family,—benefits dry goods store. Dry goods store, on new dresses being ordered, invites large party to dinner. Butcher, upon meat being ordered, treats a friend to a theatre,—benefits theatre. Butcher comes out, asks a friend to drink,—benefits hotel. Friend gets drunk, kicks up a row, is put in the watch-house, fined for getting drunk; fine goes to corporation,—benefits corporation. So, by ordering a suit of clothes, which I never intend to pay for, I benefit a whole community."

"How must the heart reverence the memory of those who in life spread the shield of their goodness between us and sorrow and evil, and even in death have left us the hallowed recollections of their virtues to enable us to think well of our fellow-creatures. Of the rich legacies the dying leave, the remembrance of their virtues is the best."

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

[Continued from page 347.]

In discussing the third of the proposed remedies, the author gives a sketch of an institution which she offers as a model, and which embraces many particulars worthy of the highest commendation, and which we should rejoice to see imitated in other parts of the country. It is the Monticello Female Seminary, endowed by Benjamin Godfrey, Esq., of Alton, Illinois.

"To secure adequate exercise for the pupils, two methods are adopted. By the first, each young lady is required to spend a certain portion of time in domestic employments, either in sweeping, dusting, setting and clearing tables, washing and ironing, or other household concerns."

"Two hours (thus employed) enable each young lady to wash the articles she has used during the previous week, which is all that is demanded, while thus they are all practically initiated into the arts and mysteries of the wash-tub." "Adjacent to the washing-room, is the ironing establishment; where another class is arranged, on the ironing-day, around long, extended tables, with heating-furnaces, clothes-frames, and all needful appliances.

"By a systematic arrangement of school and domestic duties, a moderate portion of time, usually not exceeding two hours a day, from each of the pupils, accomplished all the domestic labor of a family of ninety, except the cooking, which was done by two hired domestics."

"Is it asked, how can young ladies paint, play the piano, and study, when their hands and dresses must be unfitted by such drudgery? The woman who asks this question, has yet to learn that a pure and delicate skin is better secured by healthful exercise, than by any other method; and that a young lady, who will spend two hours a day at the wash-tub, or with a broom, is far more likely to have rosy cheeks, a finely-moulded form, and a delicate skin, than one who lolls all day in her parlor or chamber, or only leaves it, girt in tight dresses, to make fashionable calls. It is true, that long-protracted daily labor hardens the hand, and unfits it for delicate employments; but the amount of labor needful for health produces no such effect."

"This plan of domestic employments for the pupils in this Institution, not only secures regular, healthful exercise, but also aids to reduce the expenses of education, so that, with the help of the endowments, it is brought within the reach of many, who otherwise could never gain such advantages.

"In addition to this, a system of Calisthenic exercises is introduced, which secures all the advantages which dancing is supposed to effect, and which is free from the dangerous tendencies of that fascinating and fashionable amusement. This system is so combined with music, and constantly varying evolutions, as to serve as an amusement, and also as a mode of curing distortions, particularly all tendencies to curvature of

the spine; while, at the same time, it tends to promote grace of movement, and easy manners.

"Another advantage of this Institution, is, an elevated and invigorating course of mental discipline. Many persons seem to suppose that the chief object of an intellectual education is the acquisition of knowledge. But it will be found that this is only a secondary object. The formation of habits of investigation, of correct reasoning, of persevering attention, of regular system, of accurate analysis, and of vigorous mental action, is the primary object to be sought in preparing American women for their arduous duties; duties which will demand not only quickness of perception, but steadiness of purpose, regularity of system, and perseverance in action.

"It is for such purposes, that the discipline of the Mathematics is so important an element in female education; and it is in this aspect that the mere acquisition of facts, and the attainment of accomplishments, should be made of altogether secondary account.

"In the Institution here described, a systematic course of study is adopted, as in our colleges, which is designed to occupy three years. The following slight outline of the course will exhibit the liberal plan adopted in this respect.

"In Mathematics, the whole of Arithmetic contained in the larger works used in schools, the whole of Euclid, and such portions from Day's Mathematics as are requisite to enable the pupils to demonstrate the various problems in Olmstead's larger work on Natural Philosophy. In Language, besides English Grammar, a short course in Latin is required, sufficient to secure an understanding of the philosophy of the language, and that kind of mental discipline which the exercise of translating affords. In Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, Botany, Geology and Mineralogy, Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, Political Economy, and the Evidences of Christianity, the same text-books are used as are required at our best colleges. In Geography, the most thorough course is adopted; and in History, a more complete knowledge is secured, by means of charts and text-books, than most of our colleges offer. To these branches are added Griscom's Physiology, Bigelow's Technology, and Jahn's Archaeology, together with a course of instruction in polite literature, for which Chamber's English Literature is employed as the text-book, each recitation being attended with selections and criticisms, from teacher or pupils, on the various authors brought into notice. Vocal Music, on the plan of the Boston Academy, is a part of the daily instruction. Linear drawing, and pencilling, are designed also to be a part of the course. Instrumental Music is taught, but not as a part of the regular course of study."